

# **Pennsylvania Farm Bureau**

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## **Study Confirms PA Farm Bureau Concerns over Proposed I-80 Tolling**

(Camp Hill) - Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (PFB) asserted its strong opposition to any plans to place tolls on Interstate 80 in Pennsylvania. PFB joined members of the Coalition to Keep I-80 Tollfree and the Clarion County Economic Development Corporation at two news conferences to release the results of a study on the economic impacts of tolling the interstate.

“The tolling of I-80 will create an economic hardship for Pennsylvania agriculture, agribusiness and the food industry by increasing costs of everything that is transported into or out of sections of Pennsylvania that utilize I-80. The costs will not only escalate for individual farmers, grocery stores and trucking companies, but those added costs will likely end up being passed onto consumers of food,” said PFB President Carl T. Shaffer.

The study, conducted by Dr. Tracy Miller, Associate Professor of Economics at Grove City College, found that trucks and cars that use I-80 already generate \$130 million in fuel taxes and fees per year, which is about \$50 million more than what PennDOT spends each year to maintain I-80. The study also found that tolls would negatively impact many businesses and workers living in the I-80 corridor. For example, the study found that about 75,000 people work for employers that depends on I-80 for shipping business inputs and outputs, and that they could bear substantial costs if tolls are implemented.

The study also specifically looked at a potential consequence of tolling on Pennsylvania's struggling dairy industry. For example: Assuming a cost of transporting milk of \$1 per hundredweight, tolls will result in a cost increase of almost ten percent for farms that ship their milk at least 60 miles along I-80 to get to the processing plant. This assumes that milk tanker trucks will charge a hauling cost that includes the round trip cost of tolls.

“The tolling of Interstate 80 will place even further pressure on farmers who are struggling to maintain their livelihood and are unable to pass on added costs to others, while also hurting consumers, who will have to foot the bill for higher costs for food and other products,” concluded Shaffer.

On behalf of Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, dairy farmer Troy Hill of Mercer County attended a news conference at Grove City College, while dairy farmer John Dotterer of Clinton County spoke at a similar event near the I-80 exit in Lamar.

Aside from business interests, Dr. Miller found that residents of many communities near I-80 and along US routes 422 and 22 will experience greater congestion, noise, air pollution and accidents on state and local highways parallel to the Interstate due to the diversion of vehicles in response to the tolls.

***Pennsylvania Farm Bureau is the state's largest farm organization with a volunteer membership of nearly 47,000 farm and rural families, representing farms of every size and commodity across Pennsylvania.***

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